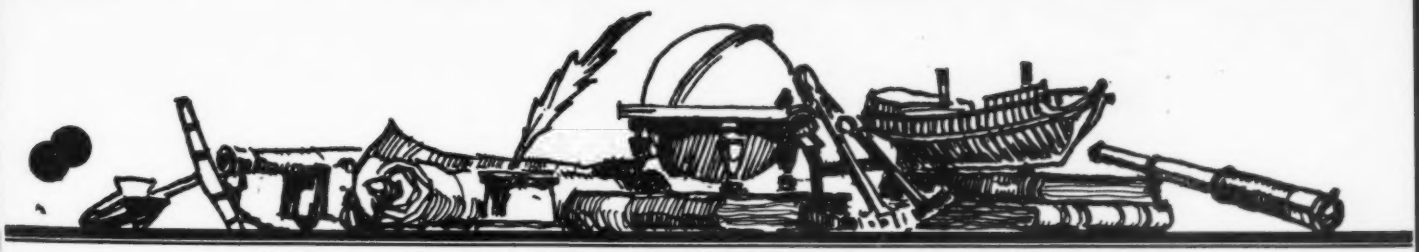
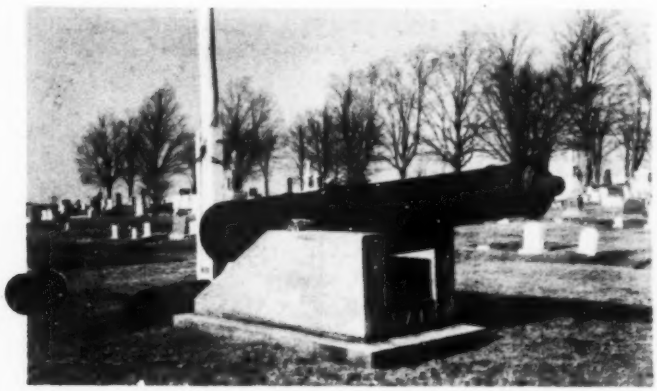


NAUTICAL RESEARCH JOURNAL

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE NAUTICAL RESEARCH GUILD

HARRY D. HAMILTON, SEC'TY-TREAS., 15004 E. GRANADA AVE., WHITTIER, CALIFORNIA

VOLUME III | JULY 1951 | NUMBER 7



OLD 38-4910

GUN AT FORT TICONDEROGA

Old 38-4910
"Old Cannon Never Die"

By Harry E. Erskine

Cannons like ships have histories and make long passages and I have never seen one emplaced upon the lawn of a New England village green, but I wanted to know all about it right away. Occasionally I have run afoul of a caretaker, local historian or elderly resident of the village who is able to answer my many questions.

One gun in particular stands out in my memory. I know a good bit of its history. I got it from my cousins, Frank and Harold Bailey of Belfast and from the local newspaper files. This venerable piece of which I write, is a cast iron, 24-pounder, inscribed upon the breech, No. "38,4910". It is eleven feet long, twenty inches across the breech, approximately six inches in the bore and weighs some five thousand pounds.

It is said to have been one of the guns brought down from Fort Ticonderoga, on ox sleds the winter of '76 by General Henry Knox and his stout hearted men. Chapelle lists 24-pounders of like dimensions as being among the guns brought off by Knox at that time. These guns were manned at the siege of Boston.

S. A. Drake wrote that "Knox's great reputation as an officer of artillery had its beginning in Boston and that he won his spurs by his successful exertions in removing (this) artillery from Crown Point to the camp at Cambridge." He had to battle the

advanced season and contrary winds in the transportation of the ponderous guns across the lake. "His bateaus were rotten, and after being loaded with infinite difficulty either sunk or let the cannon through their leaky bottoms."

The cannon and mortars were loaded on forty five strong sleds. They were dragged slowly along by eighty yoke of oxen, the route being from Fort George to Kinderbrook, and thence, via Great Barrington, to Springfield, where fresh cattle were provided. After enough trials and tribulations to have completely discouraged a lesser man the guns were finally brought through the Western Mountains of Massachusetts and down as far as Framingham where they lay in the mud for a month. They were then brought to the sea and manned at the seige of Boston.

Six years later our cannon, No. 38-4910, with three other dogs-of-war were removed from Boston to Bagaduce (Castine), Maine. The four were mounted on battery at the entrance to that bay port. General Knox, himself, in 1795 came to Maine and settled in Thomaston, hard by.

When Bagaduce was occupied by the British one volley was fired from the battery whereupon the guns were spiked and abandoned. This cowardly act by the Commanding Officer was most vehemently protested by the officers and men of that garrison force. Because of it Paul Revere and other well known Bostonians, among the personnel at the time, came near having to stand trial by Courts-Martial.

For over forty years after the close of the War, Cannon No. 38-4910 and its three mates kept silent watch over the friendly shipping in that part of Penobscot Bay. They also served as a background for Castine's picnic and moonlight petting parties. They housed their fair share of fledglings, and became a stock subject for long-winded Independance Day orations by some of our best known, leather-lunged, State-of-Maine speakers.

Over in Belfast, Maine, 12 miles across Penobscot Bay from Castine, just a few days before the Fourth in 1857, some young men of that rival seaport town were on one of the wharves considering ways and means of making the coming holiday a little bit better than the preceding ones that they had experienced. After careful cogitation they took it into their heads to make an evening raid on the Castine battery, and bring off one of the government guns. They decided to bring it across the bay to Belfast in a sloop. They wanted to mount it on the Belfast shore and fire it "the night before the Fourth." They wanted to show the lads of Castine the stuff Belfast youth was made of; and they did.

The sloop YANKEE ADAMS, of about eight tons burden, was got for the job at hand. She was Belfast owned and could be had for such a worthwhile task. The next night with seven men aboard YANKEE ADAMS sailed for Castine. Arriving at their destination the sloop was worked in alongside the bank upon which the guns were mounted. The sails were lowered and she was moored to the shore, undiscovered by the good people of Castine. Mounting the works to where the guns were emplaced they set to work with a will on piece No. 38-4910, with the intention of manhandling it right aboard the sloop. After hours of backbreaking work their combined efforts resulted simply in dumping the cannon part way down the embankment. The coming of dawn found them tired but not discouraged. They were Belfast boys. A hurried council of war was held. It was decided that they could not with so small a crew, handle the heavy piece and further that it would be likely to swamp the boat, even if they should succeed in putting it on board her. Fearful of being seen, and of the rough handling that they were sure to receive if caught by the angry citizens of Castine while attempting to steal one of their highly prized guns, they agreed to return to Belfast forthwith, and come back another night with enough reinforcements and the proper gear to do the job. They then sailed for home.

Back in Belfast the short time left them was spent in scouring the town's shipyards in search of "roller, shears, blocks, coils of rope, chains, hoisting gear, jack-screws, crow and pinch-bars, axes, shovels, picks" and the like. A pair of large wheels, used to haul timber in shipyards was converted into an ordnance sling-cart. A big scow from Pierce's shipyard above the lower Passagassawakeag bridge was fitted with rowlocks and our young heroes were ready to shove off on another try for the cannon.

The night before the Fourth turned out foggy. The YANKEE ADAMS got under way

first with a crew of seven aboard. The scow with nineteen able-bodied young men left the wharf soon after. The plan was for the YANKEE ADAMS to pick her up and tow her across the bay, but she lost her in the heavy fog. After rowing the scow for several hours her crew saw a light which they took for Dice's Headlight at Castine. They found they had gotten off their course, being swept up the bay by the tide and were then under Fort Point Light. Working down the bay at long last they landed at Castine near the gun.

After several hours of more hard work on the gun it was got the rest of the way down the bluff, on to the beach, and into the scow. Captain Hodgdon, of the DAY SPRING, was talked into towing her to Belfast, and on the morning of the "Glorious Fourth" the gun was landed at the lower steamboat wharf. It was then hauled to a high bank above the wharf and placed in position to be fired. Upon examination the gun was found to have been spiked. The rat-tailed file in the touch-hole could not be removed, so it was decided to rig up a drill and make a new vent. This was done after several hours of hard labor. The piece was then loaded and fired many times throughout the day. It was heard across the waters of the bay, even to Castine twelve miles away, from whence it had been brought the night before. Glaziers were in great demand in Belfast the next day.

Old No. 38-4910 was soon on the move again. On the 13th folks from nearby Belmont stole it and carried it to that town, where it was buried under a pile of brush. It was found and brought back and placed in the Custom House grounds on the 15th, and kept under guard for several days. It was fired on many occasions after that in honor of the Day. Later it was placed in the cellar of the Customs House for safe-keeping, but the iron door to the cellar was torn off and it was carried in the night to Rag Wharf. Vandals dumped the gun off the wharf on to the mud flats, where it lay half buried, breech end up, for a long time. It was then hauled from the mud and dragged a mile to the top of Patterson Hill. Here it was again used in the celebration of the election of Garfield and Arthur. Three young Democrats tried to prevent this by spiking the gun with a steel pitchfork, but the Republicans had some steel punches made and drove the tine down into the barrel in time. The tine was pulled out of the barrel by the use of a boat hook. After ten years, partly buried in the ground and "completely hidden by the long grass in the summer, and the snow in winter" it was found and borne, with appropriate honors to a position in front of the G.A.R. Memorial Hall and there placed on a granite gun carriage bought by that Organization at a cost of $100.00 for the carriage and foundation. Here it remained for nearly half a century when in 1896 it was replaced by two thirty-two-pounder cannon, each weighing 4480 pounds, and twenty one-hundred-pound balls, a gift from the United States War Department.

I got to thinking about Cannon No. 38-4910 one night back in June, and wondered at the time where it was now, fifty-four years after. I dug out my quill and sand and wrote Frank Bailey to learn if he knew of its present whereabouts. In return I received this message, dated June 22, 1950, Belfast, Maine: "Captain Bailey brought a card from you to my attention several days ago regarding cannon No. 38-4910. A check of local citizens reveals that the gun now reposes at the G.A.R. lot in Grove Cemetery here in Belfast".

This is the story of No. 38-4910 from General Henry Knox to now. Where it was before his day I wish I knew, and where it will be in another half century is anyone's guess. Don't tell me cannon do not have histories, like ships, and that there is not a story in every one emplaced upon the lawn of every village green.

Note on OLD 38-4910 and the Ticonderoga Gun

The picture at the right on the first page was taken at Fort Ticonderoga in the past few years. While it represents a smaller cannon (about 9-pounder) the carriage is a reconstruction and is typically that which would have been used on Old 38-4910. The sign shown in the picture states that this was one of the original guns located at Fort Ticonderoga when taken by Ethan Allen. While it is a "land cannon" these captured garrison guns were used to partly arm Arnold's fleet on the Lake. This type was also used aboard ship when ship cannon could not be provided during the early part of the Revolution. The guns recovered when the PHILADELPHIA was raised

in 1936 from the bottom of Lake Champlain are mounted on their original carriages as they were in October, 1776 and may be seen today near Essex on Lake Champlain where the PHILADELPHIA is on exhibit. The carriage in both cases are the typical Muller carriage of that date. The guns also are of the same type as 38-4910. As to armament of a ship I can show you a list of where the type of guns and number changed as many as 17 times during the ship's life. With Arnold's fleet I have seen as many as 5 lists taken between July and December 1776, no two of which are exactly identical but I consider the one of October 12, the day of the battle, by Col. Trumbull, the most likely. Roosevelt, Cooper, James and other writers have found the same trouble.

Of the 59 guns removed by General Knox from Ticonderoga, 30 were iron cannon, 13 brass cannon, 2 iron Howitzers, 6 iron mortars, 2 brass mortars and 6 cohorns. The iron cannon were as follows:

6	- 6 lb.	- 9' 7" long,	3.7" bore-2500 lbs.
4	- 9 lb.	- 8' 4" "	4.4" bore-2500 lbs.
10	- 12 lb.	- 9' long,	4.75" bore-2800 lbs.
7	- 18 lb.	- 9' long,	5.5" bore-4000 lbs.
3	- 18 lb.	-11' long,	5.5" bore-5000 lbs.

From the dimensions given it would appear that Old 38 - 4910 was one of the 18-pounders of the above. It is a Garrison type cannon of British make of about 1768 and appears identical to the type used on the Philadelphia of Arnold's fleet except in bore and weight.

Thanks are given to Mr. Harold H. Todd Jr. and Mr. Peter Starett of the Republican Journal, Belfast, Maine, who have sent us the picture of OLD 38-4910.

-E. N. Rich

The Young Sea Officer's SHEET ANCHOR -- Darcy Lever from Winthrop Pratt, Jr.

I was interested in Mr. William Fenerin's data on SWORDFISH in our May Journal. I did not have this data, nor was I aware that it had appeared in the 1858 American edition of Darcy Lever, which,by the way, may furnish a lead for further study. For example, how many such editions of Lever were there? I have the American edition of 1843 which was published by E. & G. W. Blunt at New York in that year. The first American edition was published by M. Carey and Sons at Philadelphia in 1819 and was from the second London edition, which shows that Americans recognized its value from the beginning, and the fact that our editions were still published as late as 1858 should make it an excellent source book for modellers of ships of the first half of the 19th century, especially as each edition was kept pretty well up to date.

The 1843 American edition includes much information on masts and spars, etc., of the New York ships LIVERPOOL, ASHBURTON, PATRICK HENRY,ST. JAMES, and the Newburyport ship COURIER, all engaged in the North Atlantic packet service. It also lists Grice's table of masts and spars of the following American Navy ships: PENNSYLVANIA, 120; DELAWARE, 80; FRANKLIN, 75; POTOMAC, 44; ALBANY, 22; LEVANT, 22; YORKTOWN, 16; and TRUXTON, 10. There is a table of English masts and spars for merchant ships of various tonnage from the Art of Mast-making.

In addition to the foregoing there is a full page of data on the New York ship QUEEN OF THE WEST, her builders, Brown & Bell, having furnished the data to the editor. A large folding insert gives us a very clearly engraved spar and sail plan of this ship which, incidentally, is shown much reduced in Chapelle's History of American Sailing Ships, page 279. Chappelle also includes her lines on page 286, Plate XIII, traced from her builder's draught, but does not give her spar dimensions.

Ships Data

I am enclosing a bit of information on the New York packet ship QUEEN OF THE WEST, 1843. It is along the lines of Mr. Fenerin's article on SWORDFISH (May JOURNAL), which I trust you can use. There is very little being done in the way of models of packet ships. These vessels were the first Atlantic packet ships operating on a regular schedule and I feel that more should be done along these lines. (Cont'd.p. 95)

Dimensions of Spars — Packet Ship QUEEN OF THE WEST
From Winthrop Pratt, Jr.

Length of keel to half scarf. 162' 0" Depth of lower hold. . . . . 14' 6"
Whole length . . . . . .162' 6" Depth between decks . . . . . 7' 4½"
Breadth of beam . . . . . 37' 8" Measuring 1,168 20/95 tons

	MASTS			YARDS		
	Length	Head	Diameter	Length	Diameter	Arms
FORE	80' 0"	14' 6"	2' 4"	68' 0"	1' 6 1/8"	4' 0"
Top	48' 0"	9' 0"	1' 4"	53' 6"	1' 2 1/4"	3' 9"
Topgallant..	25' 6"	2' 6"	0' 10 1/2"	39' 6"	0' 9 3/8"	2' 6"
Royal	17' 6"	.....	.....	29' 0"	0' 6 1/2"	1' 9"
Skysail. . .	14' 7"	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Pole	9' 11"	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
MAIN	82' 0"	14' 6"	2' 4"	73' 6"	1' 7 5/8"	4' 3"
Top	48' 0"	9' 0"	1' 4"	59' 0"	1' 3 3/4"	4' 0"
Topgallant .	26' 6"	2' 6"	0" 10 3/4"	45' 0"	0' 10 5/8"	2' 9"
Royal	19' 6"	.....	.....	34'..6"	0' 7 3/4"	2' 0"
Skysail . .	15' 7"	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Pole	10' 6"	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
MIZEN . . .	75' 0"	11' 3"	1' 10 1/2"	57' 6"	1' 3 3/8"	3' 9"
Top	39' 6"	7' 6"	1' 0 1/2"	44' 6"	0' 11 7/8"	3' 6"
Topgallant .	20' 6"	2' 0"	0' 8"	32' 0"	0' 7 1/2"	2' 3"
Royal	14' 6"	.....	.....	23' 0"	0' 5 1/8"	1' 5"
Skysail . .	12' 0"	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Pole	8' 0"	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

Bowsprit, outboard, 29' 6"; Diameter at bed 2' 5". Jibboom, outside the cap, 26'6"; Diameter at cap 2'3", at end 1'4". Flying jibboom, 17'0"; Diameter at cap 0'10", at end 7". Spanker boom, 46'0"; greatest diameter 0'10". Spanker gaff, 43'0"; Pole 7'0"; greatest diameter, 0'8".

Whole length on deck, 180'2". Foreside of stem to center of foremast, 34'8". Fore side of stem to center of mainmast, 61'10". Center of main to center of mizen-mast, 49'8". Center of mizen-mast to after side of stern post, 34'0".

Diameter of the lower yards, 1 inch for each 3 feet 9 inches of length.
" " " topsail " 1 inch for each 3 feet 9 inches of length.
" " " t'gallant " 1 inch for each 4 feet 3 inches of length.
" " " royal yards 1 inch for each 4 feet 6 inches of length.

Dimensions of fore and main spencer gaffs, studdingsail booms and yards, and dolphin striker are not given, however, the engraving shows both spencers the same length and equal to one half the length of the fore topgallant yard, which would be 12'9". As the drawing is not to scale, this must be considered an approximation. The dolphin striker appears to be about one half the length of the fore royal yard, or 8'9", again an approximation. Studdingsail booms and yards not not clear enough to determine their length. (From Lever's 1843 Edition)

"Crowded out of the Gam Chair"

We have received several letters asking why the Gam Chair had been discontinued—it isn't discontinued only at times crowded out--we start out bravely to write it and how much we use of it depends on how many more lines we have to go to reach the bottom of the last page, and when we come out right and have enough good copy to get there we "throw it out the window". Sometimes the typist calls for items of 5, 8 or 12 lines to fill out to the bottom of the inside pages and we use Gam Chair material for this purpose but would rather use some short stuff you send in ... We lost only one member in 1950 — but it looks as though we would lose about ten in 1951 unless some of you get busy and send in your dues. Mr. H. V.Evans of London writes that he had a pleasant visit with Captain Leighton Robinson. The Captain will return to San Francisco this month.

Introducing New Members

Major R. G. Saunders, Box 84, Beamsville, Ontario, Canada. The Major is a Civil Engineer (Retired) and excerpts from his very interesting letter follow: "I have not been satisfied with building just any ship model. It seemed to me that the time factor involved, which is considerable, could just as easily be applied to an authentic model of a ship with some historic significance. With this in view, and after much consideration,I finally decided on the 10 gun brig PERRY. The history of the PERRY is of unusual interest. She was built at Norfolk, Va., from the design of Francis Grice. The TRUXTON also designed and built by Grice, together with the PERRY "were the last wind-driven ships in our Navy". At the onset, the plans I purchased were not sufficiently authentic and lacked guidance in essential detail and I therefore contacted several famous U. S. nautical museums and some U. S. Government offices, but without success. Finally I secured sheer, body, half-breadth and spar plans at a scale of 1/4" to 1'0" from W. W.Norton Co., Inc. of New York at a cost of $8.00. These plans appear authentic as they are reproduced from Howard I. Chapelle's book "The History of the American Sailing Navy". But so far I have not been successful in securing any rigging plans or authentic detail which would assure of being able to rig the model with any degree of reasonable accuracy. Mr. Chapelle relates in the "History of American Sailing Ships" that the PERRY was a wet ship forward, and for that reason two of her original twelve guns were removed. I have no data at the moment as to whether or not the forward gun ports were permanently closed to form solid bulwarks. I have a comprehensive shop—For model work a high speed hobby tool varying from 5500 to 15000 r.p.m. would be a real time saver. I am at present considering a "hobby-Flex" or "Dunmore Duplex Grinder" both made by Dunmore Co., Racine, Wis. I am redrawing the Chapelle plans of the PERRY to a scale of 1/8"-1'0"." We enter queries for the Major on the gun ports and rigging plan of the PERRY.

Mr. Max Lembke, 876 Duncan St., San Francisco, Calif. From Mr. Lembke — "I have made about 25 or more trips in sail in the Pacific, in the Barkentine NEWSBOY and the Hall Bros. 4 mast schooner HELENE. My father was part owner and master of each ship at different times. He held a license of master in sail, any tonnage- any ocean; my father's people have been sailors and ship owners for about 250 years." Mr. Lembke was recommended by Captain Lobez, F.R.G.S.--Skipper Emeritus of the Afterguard of San Francisco.

Paul Brumbea, Jr. U. S. N. VR6 - Box 10 - MAHS, Westover A.F.B. Mass. Home address, 605 Powerdale Ave., Youngstown, Ohio. Mr. Brumbea was recommended to the Guild by the Mariners' Museum of Newport News, Va. "I am desirous of contacting other ship model builders and am anxious to obtain the address of Clyde M. Leovitt who wrote an article on the building of the LEXINGTON."

Mr. James Roukes, 4141 - 18th St., San Francisco, Calif. Mr. Roukes was also recommended by Capt. R. L. Lobez. Mr. Roukes writes: "During the war, I sailed as A.B. in the U. S. Merchant Marine and spent four years at sea. I have sailed on troopships, tankers, tug boats, Liberty ships and a P.T. boat. I have been making ship models for the past 5 years, and am working on the SEA WITCH and other government models. I am also owner of Jim's Hobby Shop (at the above address) and being in this sort of business I am in contact with ship modelers constantly. If I can be of any service to the Guild in my capacity as a hobby dealer, I will be more than glad to cooperate at any time.

Mr. Jack A. Weingand, 1511 71st., Ave., San Francisco, Calif. Mr. Weingand was recommended to the Guild by Glen C. Berger. Mr. Weigand's special nautical interests are "Down Easters" and Sailing Men-O-War. He was in the amphibious forces during the War - in the Navy. The ship models to his credit are a Gloucester Fisherman of 1910--and a 31 ton Revenue Cutter, Circa 1830 and at present is working on a model of the JAMES A. WRIGHT on a scale of 1/4". (Note - we wish we had the names of these ships for our Ship Model Registry.)

Correction: This is the second time we have corrected the address of Mrs. Anne Klein of the Caravan Book Service. She insists that we are bound to move her to a new address. For the last time, this address is - 148-30 86th Ave., Jamaica 2, N. Y. Correct your lists please.

Letters to the Secretary

Ships Plans — A Generous Offer from Howard I. Chapelle.

As soon as I get my book off my mind, I will run off a set of drawings for the Guild -- this should be in about six weeks. I think it best to ask the members what they want. The problem what they want must be sort of on a trial basis. It would be too long a job to list what could be done for I have material on 220 individual fishing schooners, some 30 coasters, a few sloops, some small types, 500 plans from the Admiralty including American, French, English, Russian, Danish, Spanish, Italian, Dutch and Venetian ships, East Indiaman, exploration, cutters, schooners, brigs, gunboats, gallies, Brigantines, barges, joys, yatchts, galley ships, frigates, Blackwall frigates, a clipper or two and such stuff.

It is far better to establish a sort of round table discussion of what is wanted and then compare with what is available and see what comes out of it. I can not promise to do an individually wanted ship, such as a named vessel, but might in some cases. After we have the period and type as an objective, we can settle down to an individual -- I can furnish all sorts of unusual items.

I can have no part in the reconstruction of a ship based on pure imagination. We would do well to digest what we have available first. We are dealing with opinions at this stage anyhow and one is probably as good as another. But personally I feel it unwise to plunge into deep water before we get off the beach so to speak. See what the members want and then I will see what I can do and we will no doubt hit a happy compromise. You ask the title of my next book - it is "American Small Sailing Craft, Their Design, Development, Construction". Comes out in November. I still have 28 drawings to do in order to complete the 100 which will be in the book. (Note: send your first and second choice for for ship plans to the Secretary.)

From Winthrop Pratt, Jr. I was quite interested in the extract from Wharton's Day Book relative to the stores delivered to the ALFRED in this month's Journal. In the course of my research on some other matters, I came across the enclosed data in the Massachusetts Archives. It is about some ordnance supplies delivered to the ALFRED by the Board of War of Massachusetts in 1777, and ties in with the notes Miss Darling contributed.

DELIVERED FROM THE LABORATORY FOR THE SHIP ALFRED,
PER ORDER OF THE BOARD OF WAR.

1777			
May 4., .	712 Round Shott. 6 pdrs. 38.0.16 at	£90 per ton	£171.12.10
June 2...	350 Cannisters grape shott for 9 pdrs. at	18/	£315.
	50 ditto for 6 pdrs. at	16/	£ 40.
	50 ditto for 4 pdrs. at	12/	£ 30.
	48 false fires at	6/	£ 14.8
	50 hand grenadoes filled at	15/	£ 37.10
	19 boxes for ditto at	12/	£ 11.8
This must be charged to the United States by Order of Council.			£619.18.10

Re: Flags, Pennants and Bunting Delivered to the ALFRED, from the Charge Book of James Wharton. "In reply to your letter of 8 May 1951 enclosing entries from the charge or day book by James Wharton, we have checked material in the Navy Department Library very carefully and find little information on the items checked in your letter.

Information on flags used by Continental vessels during the Revolution is inconclusive, contradictory and the subject of some controversy. I don't think it possible to decide for what the items of "so many years of red or blue bunting" were intended. I have found no flag illustrated or described with green stripes in any combination. Our earliest signal book USN, (Truxton, 1797) and the British signal book in the 1790's have been consulted. Green was not used.

Esek Hopkins "Signals for the American Fleet" may be found in the publication of the Rhode Island Historical Society for 1933 entitled "Correspondence of Esek Hopkins, etc." Some of the checked items are described here, notably the Jack, the Broad Pendant, the White Pendant (white flag?) and the Red Pendant. No blue and white

Letters to the Secretary

flag or pennant is listed, although the British used a blue and white striped flag to signal "preparation" and Truxton shows a blue and white pennant. The 55 ft. long pendant is quite possible since a broad pennant was made for Fort George 21 yds. long in 1774.

The item "6 lbs. shot, double headed and cross barred" does not seem logical. There is a table in "Marshall's Practical Marine Gunnery" 1822 ed. p. 77 - "weight of a certain number of double-headed shot". The smallest shot listed (12 pr.) weighed 14 lbs.

Very truly yours,
(Signed) B. G. Lake
Captain, U. S. Navy
Office of Naval Records &
Library.

Some Choice Navy Journals. My bookseller has just lent me five personal journals of an American Navy Lieutenant, later Captain G. S. Blake. As yet I have not had time to read them, but in any case I think they ought to return to the United States. Would you like to mention it in the JOURNAL? My bookseller will reserve them for two months for me. They are all leather bound, three with tooled and gilt covers provided with locks, the other two plain. They contain his notes as follows:

1829 GRAMPUS -- off the Coast of Mexico--Pensacola--Cuba--Matenzas--VINEYARD, schooner -- Cuba -- Apalachicola -- Norfolk and Massachusetts to Dorchester and other places in New Hampshire by land.
1830 From Norfolk in ship BENJAMIN MORGAN to the Mediterranean -- Gibralter -- Minarca -- Ship WARREN about Port Mahon. Frigate JAVA to Algiers and back.
1831 Java to Canaries and Cape Verdes and west coast of Africa to West Indies -- St. Thomas -- Puerto Rico, St. Domingo Cuba, Monserado, Norfolk.
1849 June - Whilst "Captain of the Fleet" of the Mediterranean Squadron to Oct. 1852. U.S.S. INDEPENDENCE.
About 1861 - a book hardly started by Blake, containing details of BROOKLYN, LANCASTER, IRIQUOIS (sail plans of these last two) with contemporary news cuttings. Details of surveys of WABASH - (Feb. 1858.) PORTSMOUTH (June 1858), MINNESOTA (June 1859), Razee Sloop MACEDONIAN (Aug. 1856) and other items.

The bookseller wants 10 pounds for the lot, but will not split them, altho he might be persuaded to do so -- nos. 1, 2, and 3 are consecutive, however, and should be kept together.
From H. V.Evans, (N.R.G.) 134 Sunningfields Road, Hendon N. W. 4, London, England.

Blackening Brass Iron Work
From the Shop of Daniel F. MacNeil

Many model makers make iron fittings of brass, it works easier, solders well and all that, but it has to be blackened to look like iron, and they then use paint. The most common is flat black, others use black enamel, this sticks well but where the paint recedes at the corners, leaving the brass exposed, it doesn't look good, so I wanted something better.

The best blackening I have found for brass was the Black Nickle Solution. Although the Copper Carbonate Solution works well I have had failures with it, but Black Nickle works every time. This is a plating solution and besides the chemicals a $1\frac{1}{2}$ volt battery has to be used, an anode of stainless steel or a small amount of Nickle anode. I will describe the articles needed first:

Double Nickle Salts (Nickle Ammonium Sulfate) . . . . 8 oz. to 1 gal.
Sodium Sulphocynate (Sodium Thiocyanata-reagent) . . .2 oz. to 1 gal.
Zinc Sulphate . . . . . 1 oz. to 1 gal.
The above to one gallon of distilled water. Mix at 80 degrees F. temperature.

A stronger solution is made up as follows:
Single Nickle Salts (Nickle Sulfate) . . . . . 10 oz. to 1 gal.
Double Nickle Salts (Nickle Ammonium Sulfate) . . . 6 oz. to 1 gal.
Zinc Sulphate Crystals . . . . . .5 oz. to 1 gal.
Sodium Thiocyanate . . . . . .2 oz. to 1 gal.
The above to one gallon of distilled water, mix at 80 degrees F.

A glass jar or crock is needed for the plating tank. The size will depend on how large the pieces one wants to plate. I use a glass one about 5 inches wide, nine inches long and about 12 inches deep, across the width I have two pieces of wood notched to fit the rim of the jar, 3/16" holes drilled thru these and two 3/16" brass rods passed thru the holes, on the top ends of the rods I soldered two lengths of bell wire about 2 feet long.

Attach the bell wires that are soldered to the 3/16" rods to a 1½ volt dry cell battery, do not use more than one volt and a half as more current will blacken faster or brown faster but rubs off easier and will do a poor "burnt" job. It will take from 10 minutes to a half an hour to blacken the pieces (depending on how black one wants them or how heavy a plate is wanted). The chemicals come in 1 pound bottles or jars and have to be bought from a Chemical Supply house. Cover tha tank and keep for future use.

In mixing up the solution make enough each time for four gallons of distilled water, in a crock, as I poured in the chemicals, I stirred the solution with a glass rod, after mixing I covered the solution and used just what I needed to keep the plating jar always about half full.

This solution will not work on iron or steel, but brass, copper or German silver blackens nicely. One thing is certain, the pieces to be blackened have to be clean, free from grease or dirt. I dip all pieces into a mixture of Hydrochloric Acid and Sulphuric Acid about equal parts. This I keep in a large mouthed glass bottle with a glass stopper. I fasten the parts to be blackened onto a brass wire, dip them in this solution of two acids for a minute or two, this will clean off the brass wonderfully, leaving it a lemon yellow, then wash this off under a faucet to remove all traces of the acids.

Then attach to the brass wire a piece of wire, 1/16" or larger, is better for passing the current thru. Immerse the pieces about one half way into the plating solution and hook the other end of the brass wire over the 3/16" rod on the negative side of the plating jar. On the positive side or the other 3/16" rod is a piece of stainless steel metal. Immerse into the plating solution and hold to the rod by a "S" hook made up of about 1/8" brass wire or rod, keep the pieces to be plated and the stainless steel, which is known as the anode, about 6 inches apart in the jar. Keep the solution at a temperature of 75 to 90 degrees while plating.

After drying put the light blue Copper Carbonate into a jar to be used when wanted. When ready to make up the blackening solution place the copper carbonate into the jar first, the amount to be put in depends on the amount that is to be made up, then pour in the Ammonia until the sulphate solution is a dark blue color. If the chemicals are pure and everything clean this should make the brass a nice black color and it won't rub off too easily.

More Tips on Soldering from the shop of R. T. Shayler

About Mr. Saunders article on soldering — I wrote an article for the Mariner in 1936, however some of the hints I gave are old fashioned now and I have changed my mind about solder with the flux in it and find that what is available today is very good and gives excellent results. I cannot stress the point too much about having the parts that are to be soldered - CLEAN. I do not mean that they should be just wiped clean or washed but they should be filed or emery papered BRIGHT and not touched by anything until the solder is applied. Whenever it is possible one should tin the parts first before soldering them together. To do this, put solder on the part that is to be soldered, holding the part with pliers, and while it is still hot shake it well to remove all the excess solder. The part will look as if it had been plated with solder just where the point is to be made. Like you were using glue on wood. (Continued on page 96.)

JEWELER'S TOOLS FOR SHIP MODELING from the Shop of John J. Flynn

Taps and Screw Plates -

There are the jeweler's screw plates that come right and left handed, and the taps, the saw and the draw plates. The screw plates take some 18 different sized round stock such as wire and cut tiny threads that hold tenaciously in either metal or hard wood, celluloid or bone. A tapped hole in .005 brass has surprising holding power. Many times metal work can be screwed together in place of soldering and it makes a neater job, especially when oxidizing is to be done. A threaded eyebolt or ring bolt when screwed into a ship has vastly greater holding power than one that is just pushed in. The taps are very delicate and a very light hand must be employed while using them. The use of oil when cutting threads helps. I put the taps in a pin vise to work them. These tools are made in Switzerland and their standards of measurement are slightly different than ours, but the tools can be used. With the right and left hand thread rigging screws or turnbuckles can be made as small as 3/8" long over all and wormgear steering gears. If a tap is broken, it is up to you to make a new one as I don't think one tap can be bought; they come in sets. I have broken many of them and made replacements which isn't so hard to do; of course it necessitates the use of some power tool that turning can be done on. I turn my replacements from 1/32" drill rod and temper it. I manage to average about 3 out of 5 that are good. This is what I have found out about the wire sizes and screw plate sizes. They are as follows:

#18	wire	.....	#57	drill	.....	# 6	tap	or	screw	plate
#20	"	.....	#66	"	.....	# 10	"	"	"	"
#22	"	.....	#70	"	.....	# 12	"	"	"	"
#24	"	.....	#73	"	.....	# 14	"	"	"	"
#26	"	.....	#77	"	.....	# 17	"	"	"	"
#28	"	.....	#78	"	.....	# 18	"	"	"	"

There is a possibility that when the metal, usually brass, is drilled it heats up and expands and is liable to make the taps run tight, so consider that angle.

Jeweler's Saws -

The Jeweler's saw is indispensable around a ship modeler's work bench. The Hercules brand of saw blades are good if they can be had. Keep a fair tension on the blade. Best use can be had from this saw by fastening a small 1/4"x2"x4" piece of board to the work bench with a "V" saw-cut in it, leave half of the board extend over the edge of the bench, lay the work to be sawed on the board and go to work. The saw blades come in sizes, the ones to use most are #5-0; which is the most practical. As far as I know #8-0 is the smallest. It is very delicate, and will go in a #.80 drill hole and that is .0135". The saw frames come in various sizes. I have one that is 6 inches long and has a 2-1/2 inch throat, and a larger one with a 6 inch throat. Take long slow strokes and the blades don't break so often.

A good place to buy jeweler's tools is--Swartchild & Company - 29 East Madison St., Chicago.

Repair Work in the Shop of John J. Flynn

Was recently called on to repair a model I built 12 years ago. The ship had sustained severe damage to the rigging and while there was not extensive damage done structurally it is a wonder to me. If the ship had been put together with glue solely as a means of fastening it would have been a total wreck. When I went to pick the model up, it was of the SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS, I found the model in a plate glass case, sitting on top of a large radiator before a window with a southern exposure. The heat had dried the wood up considerably and rigging fastenings were adrift all over altho the deck planking had not opened up. What a task it was to get in behind the shrouds and bore new holes and get the eyebolts back in place. Bobstays, bowsprit, shrouds, martingale, braces and lower yard lifts and spanker gaff vangs and lifts and spanker boom sheets. I make it a practice to use a rather soft wire when strapping blocks so the hook will let go before a spar is broken. That factor saved the model from more extensive damage. Before the model had been cased the anchors

had been torn bodily from the forecastle deck, they had been pinned down with 3/4" pins, the brass hooped buckets atop the deck house wouldn't come off so the whole rack was torn off. Why the bows were not split open is another wonder as the bowsprit had sustained a severe bump. How the open rail on the quarterdeck held together is another wonder. Most of the damage was sustained before the ship was placed in the case. The white paint was still white after it was cleaned up, no trace of yellow and the black had stood up well in spite of the direct hot sun. The white was Weber's Permalba and the black was burnt ground bone mixed with Damar varnish. After getting the ship back safely in the case I asked the owners if it would upset the decorating scheme too much if a more suitable site could be found, and now the ship should be good for a number of years.

Election of Officers of the San Francisco Afterguard

The Afterguard of the Nautical Research Guild held their regular meeting for the first time at the San Francisco Maritime Museum at Aquatic Park, Saturday, June 2, which was preceeded by a dinner at the Maison Paul restaurant on Market Street.

The Nautical Research Guild is a world wide organization, having members in many countries and includes in its ranks Master Mariners, Marine Engineers, Naval Architects, Ship Builders and Designers, Naval Officers, Authors and Artists and many others interested in the Era of Sail.

Beginning with the first meeting in August 1949 the Afterguard members have devoted much time and effort towards creating a Maritime Museum. Now the museum is a reality. Many of the models and exhibits were built and arranged by Guild members.

The following officers were elected:

President . . . . . Mr. Karl Kortum
Vice President . . . . Capt. C. T. Surridge
Secretary . . . . . .Comd'r. J. H. Willey, U.S.N.R.

At this meeting Capt. R. L. Lobez, F.R.G.S., founder and past president was elected Skipper-Emeritus. All members of the Nautical Research Guild, residing in the San Francisco Bay Area are entitled to membership in the Afterguard.

James H. Willey, Secretary

MORE ON DOUBLE TOPSAILS
Query 126 of John Shedd, by Chas. F. H. Menges

John Shedd might consider the possibility that the BELLE OF THE WEST may have carried the Howes rather than the Forbes rig. While the "Boston Atlas" article definitely states that "she has Forbes' rig", it also mentions "the top masts fidded before the lower mast heads". A variation of the Forbes' rig did have the topmasts fidded forward, with the lower topsail yard hoisting on the doubling, but, as originally designed and usually built, it had the topmast fidded abaft the lower mast head. Howes, as well as Forbes, was a Boston man, he had received the patent on his rig in 1852, it received fairly ready acceptance, and it is possible that it may have been used on a Boston vessel as early as 1853 — particularly one commanded by another Howes, very probably related. And the newspaper writer's use of the term "Forbes' rig" may have been generic rather than specific. Forbes' rig preceeded Howes' by some eleven years and its name was generally applied to any double topsail rig, even after the general acceptance of Howes' rig.

(Ships Data, continued from page 88)

Data like this of Mr. Fenerin's, should be a regular feature in the JOURNAL because it is so hard to obtain such information. For example I can supply you with a page of the same data for each of more than 20 vessels, and all from contemporary sources and including many rigs and services. I have an excellent two-page account for CHAMPION OF THE SEAS.

Why not see if some of the members need this data and if I do not have it, perhaps some of the others may.

Note: Send in your requests and if Mr. Pratt or others have the material we will be pleased to publish it. Secretary.

Queries and Answers

Answer to Query No. 152. Doctor Richardson's query on the color of BENJ. PACKARD deck house roofs? The Rudder Publishing Co.I believe, 9 Murray St., N. Y. published a book in 1926 "Ship Model Book with Special Set of Plans for the BENJ. PACKARD, American Clipper Ships and New Bedford Whaler". I believe they still publish it. They are the publishers of "Rudder". While the colors are not mentioned there are numerous pictures of the PACKARD and a lot of interesting data. George B. Douglas was the author.

Queries Nos. 155-161. Wanted: Information on the following for the Nautical Calendar.

155. Thomas Brown's patent chain-cable Bow and Deck Pipe Stoppers.
156. Jackson's patent double acting side winch and capstan.
157. Robbin's patent rudder.
158. Holme's patent crank capstan.
159. Jesse Reed's patent ship steering apparatus.
160. Perley's marine capstan.
161. Pollock's ship pump.

Thomas Hornsby, Editor, 537 Boyer Rd., Cheltenham, Pa.

Query No. 162. Capstan on a Whaler? In the book "Whale Hunt" written by the descendents of Nelson Cole Haley, mention is made of a capstan aboard a whaler. This has me stumped. I never heard of a capstan aboard a whaler although I know there can be exceptions to all rules. Has anybody got anything to say about it?

Query No. 163. Details of the brig PERRY, by Major R. G. Saunders. A. Gun ports—were the forward gun ports closed permanently after the removal of the two bow guns. B. Any suggestions for the gigging plan of the PERRY? Can anyone suggest a contemporary plan of a vessel which may be used for the PERRY?

A Note on Winston Langdon's Story of the NIGHTINGALE from Chas. F.H. Menges

According to always reliable Bob Applebee, Samuel Hanscombe laid the keel of the NIGHTINGALE, not at Portsmouth, N. H., but across the river at Eliot, Maine. The general misunderstanding on this and other of Hanscombe's vessels comes from the wording on their first documents -- "built within the limits of the Port of Portsmouth". The limits of the port in this case does not mean the city of Portsmouth but the limits of the customs district of which Portsmouth was the center. Bob has had the same difficulty determining the actual place of build of other Maine vessels. Their papers read "built in Bangor"(for instance) for any vessel built within the area where the owners had to come to Bangor to document their vessel.

(More Tips on Soldering, continued from page 93). As you use the iron, wipe the tip each time you pick it up with a rag to keep it bright. Whenever possible use a mechanical joint by hooking, screwing or riveting. Now about the three bladed propellor, I can say this: I learned to solder before the days of electric irons and we had irons of every size - from the size of your little finger nail on up to real big ones. We heated them over a flame and could control the heat so that the work did not get heated all over, but with these new fangled electric irons - it is not so easy. I have heard many ways to control the heat. No. 1 - imbed the work in a potato so only the part to solder is exposed. No. 2 - similarly immerse the part in water so that the heat does not reach the other parts that are already soldered. I have spent hours making a jig to hold the work in place and only a few minutes doing the actual soldering, but itpaid in the long run. Trying to solder parts without a jig is a haphazard way.

The best way to tin an iron is to have some solder in the lid of a can, then heat the iron after filing it bright and clean, apply paste and rub it in the solder. However if you are using solder with the flux in it, then touch the tip of the brightly cleaned iron and let the solder and flux flow over the tip and then wipe it with a clean rag until all sides of the iron are tinned. If you keep everything clean all the time, you should have no trouble. If the Guild members will write to me, I will be glad to help them with their soldering problems, if they in turn will write it up for the JOURNAL for the benefit of others.

Date of Mailing:7/7/51